

Glossary

Accord Pueblos Accord refers to the written agreements signed by DOE and the four Pueblos on December 8, 1992, stating the basic understanding and commitments of the parties and describing the general framework for working together. Subsequently, cooperative agreements between each Pueblo and DOE, and between each Pueblo and the University of California, have been signed, which specify further details related to the accord agreements.

archaeological sites (resources) Any location where humans have altered the terrain or discarded artifacts during either prehistoric or historic times.

articulated concrete mattress (ACM) A concrete and steel flexible barrier or blanket that is used to stabilize soils or steep slopes that are prone to erosion.

best management practices (BMPs) Structural, nonstructural, and management techniques, other than effluent limitations, to prevent or reduce pollution of surface water. They are the most effective and practical means to control pollutants. BMPs can include schedules of activities; prohibitions of practices; maintenance procedures; treatment requirements; operating procedures; and practices to control site runoff, spillage or leaks, sludge or waste disposal, or drainage from raw material storage.

Burn Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) Team A multidisciplinary, multiagency team of individuals experienced in recovery planning exercises and in the implementation of erosion and flood control measures.

burn severity A relative measure of the degree of change in a watershed that relates to the severity of the effects of a fire on watershed conditions.

contamination The deposition or discharge of chemicals, radionuclides, or particulate matter above a given threshold.

controlled burn See prescribed burn.

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) The CEQ coordinates federal environmental efforts and works closely with agencies in the development of environmental policies and initiatives.

crown fire A fire that advances rapidly from tree to tree primarily through the tops of trees or shrubs.

cultural resources Any prehistoric or historic sites, buildings, structures, districts, or other places or objects (including biota) considered to be important to a culture, subculture, or community for scientific, traditional, or religious purposes or for any other reason.

cumulative impacts Cumulative effects on the environment result from the incremental effect of an action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency or person undertakes them. These effects can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over a period of time.

dam An artificial barrier, together with its appurtenant works, constructed for the purpose of impounding or diverting water.

earthen dam A small water retention structure constructed of excavated natural materials, usually soil, placed with sloping sides.

ecological resources For the purposes of the analyses presented in this document, ecological resources include all flora and fauna, sensitive species, threatened or endangered species, and wetlands that could have been affected by the actions taken during a major disaster emergency.

effluent A waste stream flowing into the atmosphere, surface water, groundwater, or soil. Most frequently the term applies to waste discharged to surface waters.

Emergency Response Team (ERT) The ERT is a rapid response team created to respond to the Cerro Grande Fire. The team is composed of representatives of DOE, the University of California (as management and operations contractor for LANL), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (working under an Interagency Agreement to construct stormwater control structures in the field).

environmental assessment (EA) A written environmental analysis that is prepared pursuant to the *National Environmental Policy Act* to determine whether a major federal action could significantly affect the environment and thus require preparation of an environmental impact statement. If the action would not significantly affect the environment, then a finding of no significant impact is issued.

environmental impact statement (EIS) A document required of federal agencies by the *National Environmental Policy Act* for proposals for legislation or major federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. A tool for decision-making, it describes the positive and negative environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternative actions.

Environmental Restoration (ER) Project The project at LANL responsible for investigation and remediation of solid waste management units or potential release sites (PRSs).

finding of no significant impact A formal declaration that a specific federal action that is subject to NEPA has been determined not to have an adverse impact on the environment.

firebreak A generally linear stretch of land that is completely cleared of all flammable growth, usually by bull dozer. The purpose of a firebreak is to create a barrier that is devoid of fuels to contain the spread of a wildfire.

floodplain The relatively flat canyon or valley bottoms next to and formed by rivers that are subject to overflow or flooding.

fuel break A generally linear stretch of land that is cleared of down and dead wood and that is thinned to reduce the number of trees per acre. Fuel breaks are designed to prevent the spread of a fire without the clearing of all vegetation.

hazard trees Trees that have been damaged and are a physical hazard to personnel or property.

height of flood retention structure The vertical measurement expressed in feet as measured from the downstream toe of the structure at its lowest point to the elevation of the top of the structure.

hydrophobic soil layer Soils that become impermeable to water movement as a result of high temperatures often associated with wildfires.

low-head weirs Permeable rock dams designed to maintain a low level of flood water flow to limit erosion and contain sediments.

jersey bouncers Portable concrete barriers usually about 10 ft (3 m) long by 3 ft (0.9 m) high that are temporarily placed to prevent flood damage.

kiva One of the remote-controlled critical assembly buildings associated with the Los Alamos Critical Experiment Facility located in TA-18 in Pajarito Canyon.

low-head weir A permeable rock dam placed across a water course to regulate or reduce water flow.

low-level waste (LLW) All radioactive waste that is not classified as high-level waste, transuranic waste, spent nuclear fuel or “11e(2) by-product material” as defined by DOE Order 4820.2A, Radioactive Waste Management.

material disposal area (MDA) Areas at LANL used to treat or dispose of hazardous materials and wastes.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) A law that requires federal agencies to consider the environmental impact of their activities—including the impact on cultural resources; endangered, threatened, or sensitive species; and floodplains or wetlands—before deciding to proceed with those activities.

natural resources For the purposes of this document, lands providing natural, recreational, and economic opportunities for various users.

one-hundred year flood The flood magnitude expected to be equaled or exceeded on the average of once in 100 years. It may also be expressed as an exceedance frequency with a 1 percent chance of being exceeded in any given year.

particulate matter Matter in the form of liquid or solid particles.

potential release sites (PRSS) Sites potentially contaminated with hazardous or mixed wastes that are subject to the requirements of RCRA.

prescribed burn A controlled fire intentionally or naturally ignited under specific environmental conditions that is confined to a predetermined area.

radionuclides Radioactive isotopes of various elements that are specifically or collectively regulated under certain federal and state laws.

record of decision The official agency determination that usually follows the completion of an environmental impact statement.

region of interest The area most likely to be affected by an agency action as defined under NEPA.

remediation The decontamination of facilities or sites to an acceptable level of contamination suitable for general or specific use.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) RCRA is an amendment to the first federal solid waste legislation, the *Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965*. Under RCRA, Congress established directives and guidelines for the regulation of solid and hazardous wastes.

riparian area Area directly adjacent to a stream bottom that requires water to be present only temporarily during the year.

rock dam A small water retention structure constructed of local stones and soil, placed horizontally across drainages to slow down water flow.

rock gabion A box formed with chain-link fence filled with stones placed in drainage channels and used for flood and erosion control.

sensitive species Species of concern at the federal and/or state level are referred to as “sensitive species.”

site-wide environmental impact statement (SWEIS) A type of programmatic EIS that analyzes the environmental impacts of all or selected functions at a DOE site. As part of its regulations for implementation of NEPA, DOE prepares SWEISs for certain large, multiple-facility DOE sites; it may prepare EISs or EAs for other sites to assess the impacts of all or selected functions at those sites (10 CFR Part 1021.330 [c]).

slurry bomber A large airplane that drops fire-retarding chemicals to suppress or slow the movement of a wildfire.

solid waste management unit Any unit from which hazardous constituents may migrate, as defined by RCRA. A designated area that is, or is suspected to be, the source of a release of hazardous materials into the environment that will require investigation and/or corrective action.

special environmental analysis (SEA) A special environmental analysis report provides an assessment of the impacts that have resulted because of actions undertaken by DOE (or undertaken for DOE by other parties at DOE's direction) to address actions taken during a major disaster emergency. A special environmental analysis report includes descriptions of the actions, the resulting impacts from the actions, mitigation measures taken for these actions, and an analysis of cumulative impacts.

stakeholder Any member of the public, federal or state government agencies, and Indian tribes that may be affected by an agency action.

straw wattle Long (~30 ft) tube-shaped nylon mesh stuffed with straw used on slopes and drainages to reduce rainwater flow and soil erosion.

stormwater discharge Run-off from rainwater events that are generally subject to the NPDES storm water permit requirements of the *Clean Water Act*.

storm water retention structure Structures of various designs intended to moderate storm water runoff, especially in areas of high runoff potential.

technical area (TA) A geographically defined area at LANL containing land and facilities dedicated to one or more functions.

threatened and endangered species Mammals, birds, fish, plants, or other living organisms threatened with extinction by human-produced or natural changes in their environment. Requirements for declaring species threatened or endangered are contained in the *Endangered Species Act of 1973*.

transuranic waste Radioactive waste containing certain concentrations of plutonium that require disposal at the DOE Waste Isolation Project Plant Facility in New Mexico.

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) The Federal agency that sponsors energy research and regulates nuclear materials used for weapons production.

watershed An area of land where precipitation collects into one flow that drains into a river or other body of water.

wetland Land or areas exhibiting hydric (requiring considerable moisture) soil concentrations, saturated or inundated soil during some portion of the year, and plant species tolerant of such conditions.

wildfire A forest fire that is not under human control.

